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paper smoothly; I find this a most troublesome process, and for myself, I greatly prefer either of the following methods: No. 2, I call the Japanese screen. The framework is covered with canvas as in No. 1; this is then painted with good black paint, three coats, then with gold paint, Bessemer's or Ordish's. Put in Japanese designs, storks, flowers, Fusiyama, ladies in balconies or boats, men with umbrellas—anything that strikes your fancy, sometimes allowing the subject of one panel to stray into the next. If you are not very confident of your drawing, the design may be sketched first with a yellow crayon; but should you make any mistakes with the gold paint, if you will allow it to dry you can easily paint it out with a little black paint, taking care also to let that dry before you work on it again with gold. A Japanese border taken all round the screen (not round each panel) adds greatly to the rich effect of the whole. It saves a great deal of time and trouble to stencil it. Draw the design on cartridge paper, or strong brown paper, cut it out and varnish the paper; when quite dry, place it in position and dab the gold paint on with a stencil brush. There should be very little oil in the gold paint or it will run. If you have to do a great deal of the same pattern it is worth while to have the stencil plate cut in tin; any tinman can do it; I usually pay two shillings for one. Tin can be cleaned better than paper, and never gets "messy." Put on the gold paint very thick or it will soon change color; you may go over the designs two or three times. Hinge, size, and varnish as in No. 1, only beware of putting turpentine in the varnish.

No. 3 is the simplest way possible of making a screen. The wooden framework is covered with enameled cloth; light blue on one side, and black or mahogany-colored on the other, will look well; suitable designs are painted in oil colors and the screen is done. Flowers look very well on a screen of this sort; wild roses or honeysuckle on the blue side, and sunflowers, nasturtiums, or poppies on the other side. Birds and butterflies add to the effect. Eastern street scenes also look well on the blue, while interiors may be put in on the brown. It can be finished off like the others with a stamped edging and brass nails.

JACQUELINE, Pentsaison, Cardigan, Wales.

#### FIXING PASTEL DRAWINGS.

Editor of *The Art Amateur*:

SIR: Is there any simple preparation safe to use for fixing pastel drawings? If so, please tell me how it can be made and applied.

S. B., New Orleans.

ANSWER.—Infuse an ounce and a half of the best isinglass, during twenty-four hours, in five ounces of distilled vinegar. Add a quart of hot water, and keep the liquor in a gentle heat, but not warmer than can be borne by the finger. Stir it until the isinglass be entirely dissolved, then filter it through paper. Put the filtered liquor into a large bottle, pouring in alternately a glass of this compound and a glass of spirits of wine. The bottle may then be corked, and the liquid shaken for about seven or ten minutes, to mix the whole sufficiently. When this mixture is to be used, place the picture horizontally, with the crayoned side downwards, supported at the sides or corners so that the color does not touch the table. The liquid is then applied to the back, with a brush of about an inch in diameter until the liquid has penetrated through to the crayoned surface, and all the colors become moistened and shining, as if varnish had been passed over them. The first application will penetrate quickly, in consequence of the dryness of the paper, and the absorbent nature of the colors. This is repeated, but with less liquid, and every care must be observed to spread the mixture with great evenness over the back of the picture, in order that there be no stain. When this process is completed, the work may be turned with its face upwards, and allowed to dry.

Sometimes there are colors which are not properly set by being once subjected to the process. In such case, apply the mixture again, in the same manner as before. There may still remain minute particles of crayon which have not been set by the liquid. Some of these particles might become detached from the background, and cause mischief to the flesh colors. They must, therefore, be removed by passing the finger over the background, in the same manner in which the picture was painted. Should the drawing have become flattened in tone, or should it appear that a greater degree of decision or force is anywhere required after the work has been fixed, a portion of crayon may be dissolved in a small quantity of this liquid, and in this way the crayon may be employed, like body color, to touch upon and to strengthen these parts which may require additional force.

#### AN EX-SCENE PAINTER'S PROTEST.

Editor of *The Art Amateur*:

SIR: The branch of art known as scene painting is little understood, and unfortunately still less appreciated. From the mere fact of the great obstacles to be overcome, it is so difficult in its production of effects that, as an ex-scene painter, the writer feels bound to claim for it the place it deserves to hold in the attention of the thinking public.

It is obvious that before the commencement of a work of importance, covering some hundreds of square feet, a scaled sketch or drawing must be made. These sketches are generally in water-color, and frequently command good prices after having served their purpose. Hence it becomes evident that the successful scene painter must be enough of an artist to be able to draw and color decently, on a small scale as well as on a large one. As with all other artists, so it is with him, a labor of years to attain to excellence in his especial branch. No matter how great his natural talent, he requires practice and genuine work before he can place his conceptions artistically upon the canvas; and so far from producing a scene in a few hours, as some people imagine, it is, on the contrary, frequently a work of many weeks. For example, the scene of the Square of St. Mark, painted by W. Telbin, Jr., for Chas. Calvert's production of the "Merchant of Venice," in Manchester, occupied that artist for more than nine consecutive weeks of close application—the sky upon the back cloth being alone a work of no less than five days. The sketches made previously in Venice, purposely for this and other scenes in the play, were sold afterwards for high prices.

One of the great disadvantages under which the scene painter has to labor, is the supreme indifference to him and his work displayed by the press. He may slave away months of his life upon the production of the scenes for a play, and, without personal influence with the critics, his efforts are in nine cases out of ten utterly ignored. He knows that any mention of his work is left entirely to the whim of the dramatic critic, who goes to the new piece to bestow upon it his praise or condemnation, as he may think fit, who is generally devoid of any knowledge of painting, and who looks upon the scene solely as a background for the performers. The young enthusiast who has labored so long upon the mounting of the play—often working till the small hours, and frequently all night, will usually find, on reading the papers the next morning, that there is a whole column of praise devoted to the sublime genius of the comedian who has been making grimaces at intervals from eight till eleven, and that the work he has prided himself upon so much has not even received mention. A proper acknowledgment of his efforts would certainly be a goad to his ambition. But thus ignored, like many another young painter, with bright talents and boundless enthusiasm, he comes gradually to the conclusion that there is no real benefit to be gained in the end, and that it is quite as well to get through the work just decently enough to claim his salary on pay day. It has frequently happened, to give a case in point, that upon Mr. Irving's productions at the Lyceum Theatre in London, perhaps the

finest the world has ever seen, the only notice taken of the scenery has been an addendum at the end of two or more columns of criticism—"the scenery by Mr. Hawes Craven is up to his usual standard"—or some other remark equally encouraging. Not a word of consideration or commendation does the painter receive for the many weeks of labor and research spent in the reading-room of the British Museum, or in consultations with the first architects and archaeologists before the months of actual painting began.

Equally worthy of eulogy in this country are the fine interiors, for which Mr. Marston has made the Union Square Theatre celebrated, where every detail, whether in construction or mural decoration, is the result of close study beforehand. Another notable work is the curtain of Wallack's New Theatre, wherein every inch of that eleven hundred square feet of canvas has been painted by Mr. Goatcher from the material with an exactness, and yet with an artistic rendering, only to be arrived at by the study of years; the whole composition being a most harmonious blending and massing of color. Let those who have looked upon scene painting as merely mechanical, examine for one minute the effect of that piece of work, wherein some of the folds in the drapery are painted with such realism as to create almost a feeling of disbelief that it is not the real fabric, and ask themselves whether it is the more difficult to obtain this effect upon such a scale, or upon a two-foot canvas.

J. M. W. Turner was in his early days a scene painter, and, although it is not generally known, so was Sir Edwin Landseer. Add to these Leitch, Clarkson Stanfield, some eminent French painters, and last, but not least, David Roberts, whose scenes in the old Drury Lane Theatre are still preserved as the work of an artist who was frequently known to confess that he owed all his knowledge of breadth of effect to his practice as a young man in the "Painting Room."

It is to be hoped that ere long the indifference with which this branch of art has been regarded will wear away, and that its followers and their work will receive deserved acknowledgment. By the mere fact of theatrical scenery being made a subject for art criticism, its improvement will be rapid, and not only will it grow to be a labor of enthusiasm with the artists themselves, but by proper newspaper notice it will in course of time attain to its right place in the estimation of the public at large.

E. S. P., New York.

#### DECORATION DEFINED—A STUFFED EAGLE.

Editor of *The Art Amateur*:

SIR: Will you oblige a constant reader (x) by defining all that is implied by the terms "decorated" and "decorative" in art? and (2) by suggesting a suitable mount for a stuffed eagle? I have to admit such a treasure (?) into my library, and the taxidermist who has the bird in charge advises a piece of rock. I cannot think that the rock will look proper on the carpet. A friend suggests a stout limb of an old cedar; but then I am puzzled to know what the cedar should rest upon. The bird must be about three feet from the floor and standing near a cabinet of books.

F. W. A. O., Hyde Park, Mass.

ANSWER.—(1) The terms "decorated" and "decorative" in art are used in opposition to the term "pictorial" in art. The conditions of the latter demand a scene or object in perspective and a certain degree of imitation. The former implies only the ornamental treatment of surfaces, without necessarily requiring either natural forms, perspective or imitation. (2) A stuffed eagle in a library, "only three feet from the floor," is likely to be a difficult tenant to adjust. We advise you to place it as high as you can; for instance, on top of the book-case. Your taxidermist can easily mount it on a piece of thick plank, heavy enough to stand firm. If you cannot do this, then have a tripod perch of polished oak or ebonized wood, with metal "shoes" that can be screwed to the floor. This, of course, may be of any desired height, and the crosspiece at the top may be a section of a cedar limb, if you choose, though we should prefer a crossbar similar to the legs of the perch.

#### GROTTO FERNERY FOR A STAIR-LANDING.

Editor of *The Art Amateur*:

SIR: My house has a landing, with a recess between the first flight of stairs and the second, overlooking a stack of unsightly chimneys, and my wife wishes to use this recess for a fernery. I tell her it would involve the expense of a heating apparatus and a good deal of money to maintain the plants. She says no: the cost would be very small, and no heating apparatus is needed. We have agreed to leave the matter to you.

CELEBS, Toledo, O.

ANSWER.—Your wife is perfectly right. A small grotto fernery would be the best use to which you could put the landing. By choosing hardy ferns no heating apparatus is needed to keep the plants healthy; they involve little expense after the first outlay; and will always look fresh and green in places where flowering plants would either never thrive or quickly lose their bloom and fragrance. They require but little attention, only needing to be kept free from insects and tolerably moist. As ferns thrive better in pots than when planted in beds, virgin cork to a height of four feet should be arranged round the sides of the landing, about which the ferns in pots should be placed. Pots should then be hung in profusion up the sides to the ceiling, and baskets filled with various kinds of lycopods suspended from the roof. Water introduced is always an improvement, and can be managed by running a pipe connected with a cistern behind the cork to the middle of the back of the recess, and allowing water from this to drip over rockwork and ferns into a large and shallow reservoir that is fixed to the floor beneath and provided with a waste pipe.

#### SUNDRY QUERIES ANSWERED.

S. S. S., Williamsport, Pa.—Plaster casts may be painted, if they have been first thoroughly sized with isinglass and water, to prevent the paint from sinking in. If too shiny, rub them with turpentine. A soiled plaster cast that has not been painted should be thoroughly rubbed, and with a penknife carefully scraped when the dirt will not readily come off.

E. L. BRESSANT, New Haven, Conn.—It is entirely practicable for you to fire your overglaze work yourself. Write to Stearns Fitch & Co., Albany, N. Y., for price-list of portable kilns and directions for using.

AN OLD SUBSCRIBER, Lowell, Mass.—We do not know that materials for tapestry painting are sold in Boston as yet, but Wadsworth Bros. & Howland, we are informed, will soon have them. For information concerning this sort of painting, address C. S. Samuel, 42 W. 23d St., New York.

THE OAKS, Cazenovia, N. Y.—The Düsseldorf water colors, manufactured by Dr. Fr. Schoenfeld & Co., come in tubes. It is, of course, however, oil-colors, and not water-colors, that are used with turpentine as a medium for painting on satin.

TWO GIRLS, West Haven, Conn.—Illuminations on vellum would certainly not be salable unless of extraordinary artistic merit. Heraldic designs are sometimes emblazoned on vellum, but such work, of course, is only done to order.

D. G., Delaware, O.—The South Kensington School of Art is a school similar to our American art schools, with teachers for the several departments. It is open for pupils in the summer as well as in the winter.

#### A LIBRARY FOR ART STUDENTS.

A SERIES of handbooks for the instruction of students in every department of pictorial, architectural, and industrial art has been begun by Quantin, the well-known Paris publisher. Each volume is to be written by a specialist in his department, who will divest what he has to say of superfluous erudition, and convey to the reader in the most interesting and direct manner the information he may have to impart. There are to be no less than a hundred of these volumes, which should form a veritable encyclopædia of art. The entire work is to be under the general direction of M. Jules Comte, chief of the division of instruction in the French Government art bureau. The illustrations are generally abundant and good enough for the purposes intended. Mr. J. W. Bouton sends us four of the series, marked at \$1.25 each.

The "Manual of Greek Archæology," by Maxime Collignon, accomplishes its purposes very well, so far as the text is concerned. It is simply and clearly written, with enough technical information to show that the writer is well informed, and not enough to make the volume dry for the general reader. Mr. Collignon begins with the origin of Greek art, showing the foreign influences which affected it, and treats briefly of the several departments of architecture, sculpture, terra cotta modelling, coins, gems, bronzes, and medals, reserving other branches, such as painting and mosaics, to be treated more fully in special volumes of the series. The illustrations, while abundant enough, are far from satisfactory—a matter to be regretted, inasmuch as it would seem too much to expect the student to appreciate the great works of art whose praises are so freely sung in the text, when he considers how lamentably the original models have failed in inspiring the artists who supply some of the drawings.

Two passages in the book especially interesting to American readers are contained in the chapter on "Phœnician Influences," where the author speaks of the Di Cesnola collection, and in the chapter in which he discusses the origin of the Venus of Milo. He seems to ignore that General Di Cesnola has written a book on Cyprus, the author only mentions the work of Newton and Colvin in that connection, and having heard nothing apparently concerning the Feuardent-Cesnola controversy he speaks of the temples of Golgoi and Kurium as if their existence had actually been established. In regard to the Venus of Milo M. Collignon inclines to M. Ravaisson's theory, that this noble fragment belonged to a group of Mars and Venus like that preserved in the Villa Borghese. We must say this theory seems to us more reasonable than the curious fancy of Mr. Stillman, who, in a recent number of *The Century Magazine*, thinks he recognizes in this statue the Niké Apteros of Athens.

The "Manual of Artistic Anatomy" is by Mathias Duval, professor at the "Ecole des Beaux Arts." The subject is treated practically and comprehensively, and is serviceably illustrated, notably so in the chapter showing the action of the muscles in the various expressions of the face. The illustrations are insufficient for the full understanding of the text. Despite this, however, the manual is so much the best of its kind we have seen that we think it might pay some one to translate it into English.

"Mosaics," by Gerspach, treats the subject very agreeably, both historically and technically. The illustrations have a varied range extending from the ancient "Battle of Arbela," in the Naples Museum to Belloni's nineteenth century pavement in the "Salle de Melpomène" in the Louvre.

"The Painters of Holland," by Henry Havard, is a comprehensive sketch of the progress of Dutch art up to the end of the eighteenth century. The illustrations are numerous and valuable as memoranda of famous pictures, but only in a few instances are they in themselves of artistic value.

#### BOOKS RECEIVED.

THE GREAT ARTISTS. MURILLO. By Ellen E. Minor. MEISSONIER. By John W. Mollett. New York: Scribner & Welford.

THE GREAT MUSICIANS. PURCELL. By Wm. H. Cummings. ENGLISH CHURCH COMPOSERS. By W. A. Barrett. New York: Scribner & Welford.

HOPES AND FEARS FOR ART. By William Morris. Boston: Roberts Brothers.

JOHN EAX. By A. W. Tourgee. New York: Fords, Howard & Hulbert.

#### SUPPLEMENT AND FIRST PAGE DESIGNS.

PLATE CLX. is a design for a plaque or plate, drawn by Georges Wagner. Make the sky ultramarine and light sky-blue, lightest above; water, ultramarine and turquoise blue, shaded with neutral gray; leaves, deep chrome green and ochre; tops of cat-tails, brown 3, and black; lobster and crab, iron violet, shaded lightly with gray; shell, bluish and gray, with some red; sea-weed, carmine. In order to get the white horizontal effects scratch the water when very dry, and put a quick stroke of turquoise blue over it.

PLATE CLXI. is a design for a cup and saucer, drawn by Georges Wagner. Any ground will do, if it is light; the legs, handle, and part of the border of the cup should be gilded. Make the roses carmine 1 and 3; leaves, deep chrome green, mixing yellow, and grass-green, and brown; ribbon, light blue, shaded with darker blue. Make the monogram a light tint with a deep outline—for instance, light red outlined with brown. It should not be in gold, as that would make it look too much like a barber's shaving cup.

PLATE CLXII. gives a variety of Japanese motives for decorations, which all amateur painters will find valuable.

PLATE CLXIII. is a design suitable for a plaque or panel, drawn by P. M. Beyle, from his painting in the Paris Salon of 1882. Make the sky ultramarine blue and gray 2; caps, white shaded with gray and mixing yellow; flesh tints, brownish (carnation and yellow-ochre); waist, deep blue and neutral gray; petticoat, brown 108 shaded with brown 3 and gray; baskets, ochre and brown; water, like the sky, but more grayish; ground and stone, gray and brown; sleeves of the kneeling woman, red-dish (brown, red, and gray); apron, warm gray, iron violet and neutral gray in the shaded portions; wooden shoes, ochre and gray with neutral gray for the leather.

PLATE CLXIV. gives suggestions for "etching" on linen, reproduced from illustrations by R. Caldecott.

PLATE CLXV. gives a number of Persian and Indian decorative designs, which art needleworkers will find useful.

PLATE CLXVI. is a design for wood carving from a panel by Berain in the Louvre.

THE frontispiece is a design drawn by Camille Piton for a portrait plaque. It represents a German costume of the middle of the sixteenth century. Make the hat brown (brown bitume 3, shaded with gray and black); feather on the left side of face red (red brown and brown 108); hair, brown with gray 2, brown shaded with neutral gray, and even a little bit of deep blue; flesh tint, ivory yellow, and carnation 2, shaded with gray and yellow brown; collar, small details in bluish gray, gray 1 and 2, and blue; sleeves in velvet (black, and brown, and sepia); front of dress, yellow brown shaded with gray 1 and brown 108. The ground showing the stroke of the brush may be in any color, as gray warmed with ochre.